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COUNTRY Peru

SUBJECT Comments on Requirements in Textile
Engineering Education

PLACE ACQUIRED
(BY SOURCE) Lima/Cuzco and elsewhere

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(BY SOURCE) [REDACTED] 25X1X6

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1. The textile industry is one of the largest industries of Peru, and if the nation is to be self-sufficient in clothing its people, then textiles is one of the most essential. The greatest concentration of the industry is at Lima, where there are some six cotton mills, four woolen mills, 10 rayon or synthetic plants, 45 knitting plants, seven spinning mills, and one rayon and one acetate plant. Other textile mills are at Ayacucho (two), Cuzco (five), Arequipa (10), Huancayo (six) and some few others scattered about. In 1950, some 1450 workers were employed in 10 rayon plants, 2600 in 70 knit goods plants, seven thousand in 16 general textile mills, and many others in wool, jute, braid, viscose and acetate plants, and so forth. These statistics are important only in that they indicate a need for men trained in textiles. This becomes more realistic as competition becomes keener, and as the technological developments in the industry filter through to Peru.

2. [REDACTED] the definite need of men trained in textiles, particularly in the new concepts of quality control, physical and chemical testing, instrumentation, and textile processing methods. At present the only textile engineering education available in Peru is at the National School of Engineers at Lima. This is an autonomous college offering five-year programs of undergraduate study in various engineering fields. At present textile education is extremely limited in scope at this institution, for only four courses in textiles are offered as electives and these are within the framework of the Department of Chemical Engineering. One course dealing with wool technology is offered in the fifth year, and the other three dealing with fibers, dyes, and cotton technology are offered in the fourth year. The courses are taught by professors recruited from industry, and who teach on a part-time basis only. At this time four such professors are devoting short periods of time to this textile education program.

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3. No laboratory equipment for this textile education program is available, and as a result, theory only can be taught. Laboratory space, except for some chemical work, has not been available, but a new building to house Chemical Engineering is being constructed.
4. It has been thoroughly demonstrated in the United States as well as in other large textile-producing areas that textile education is comprised of essential elements of lecture, demonstration, and laboratory work, with research and investigation coming into effectiveness at the higher levels. The laboratory becomes the proving ground for the student; it enables him to see, to appreciate, to apply, and to become the master of the many complex phases of textiles. Not only is teaching difficult for many aspects of textiles, but it also loses effectiveness without the laboratory proving ground. The industry is becoming increasingly complex because of technological advances, and without the laboratory and its essential basic equipment for evaluation of these factors, any teaching program is shallow and falls far short of the needs. Furthermore, no physical or chemical research is at all possible without the laboratory.
5. This leads to the conclusion that any program of improving course content or setting up of a proper curriculum must include as essentials two elements; first, laboratories containing equipment and instruments specifically designed for textile education and research; secondly, provision for teachers who can handle this equipment in a program of laboratory training. The latter requirement at first thought seems to be of a nature easily met, and actually it should be merely one facet of the program. However, it is contrary, or at least not common, to the scheme in practice. The strength of the National School of Engineers is in the fact that its teachers are men successful in their own spheres of activity in the textile business who devote time to teaching. This becomes a weakness when laboratory teaching is attempted, for these men busy with other duties and responsibilities are not available for the long and exacting hours of contact work supervising small groups of students. Thus, to be successful, any program of textile education must provide for the training of younger men who can work on a full-time basis during the academic year to handle laboratory work as well as demonstration periods. In addition, such men should be able to assume a portion of the lecture work under the guidance of the older experienced men, so that eventually they take over a greater portion of the program.

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